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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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# 21-year-old college student raped by biker in Bengaluru

## The unidentified man offered her a ride near Bommanahalli

**BENGALURU, 18 AUG**

A 21-year-old woman was allegedly raped by an unidentified biker near Bommanahalli in the wee hours of Sunday when she was returning home after attending a party at Koramangala.

The woman, studying at a college in Anekal, was heading to her home in Hebbagodi on a two-wheeler when she had a minor accident with an auto-rickshaw near Nexus Forum Mall on Hosur Road, leading to an altercation.

Police arrived on the scene to manage the situation. After the incident, the woman from outside Karnataka decided to hitch a ride to complete her journey. She took a ride from one person for part of the way, then got off and hitched a second ride. The second driver is suspected to have diverted her to a deserted area near Bommanahalli and raped her around 1am on Sunday.

The survivors' friends found her distressed and partially clothed, covered with a tarpaulin **PHOTO: PTI**

The woman had saved her father's and a friend's contact details as emergency numbers on her phone, which helped alert her family and friends after the attack. Her friends found her distressed and partially clothed, covered with a tarpaulin, and took her to a hospital.

A case has been registered at HSR Layout Police Station under section 65 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Police have formed a 40-member team, divided into five groups, to track down the suspect.

The rape in Bengaluru occurred amid the widespread outrage over the rape and murder of a 31-year-old medical student of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. —*PTI*

- The rape in Bengaluru occurred amid the widespread outrage over the rape and murder of a 31-year-old medical student of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. Police have formed a 40-member team to probe the case

People protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Sunday against the rape and murder of a resident doctor in Kolkata **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

# SC takes cognisance of Kolkata rape, hearing on Tuesday

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

The Supreme Court has taken suo motu cognisance of the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, and will hear the case on 20 August.

According to the cause list of 20 August uploaded on the apex court website, a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is scheduled to hear on Tuesday a matter titled 'In Re: Alleged rape and murder incident of a trainee doctor in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata and related issue'.

The alleged rape and murder of the junior doctor in a seminar hall of the state-run hospital has sparked nationwide protests.

Kolkata police however has dismissed the social media reports claiming the presence of 150 grams of semen, or even 150 mg of it, inside the body of the Kolkata doctor.

Observing that the violence in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital was failure of state machinery, the high court had on August 16 directed the police and the hospital authorities to file affidavits on the situation there.

Meanwhile, expressing anguish over the Kolkata rape-murder incident, over 70 Padma awardee doctors have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding quick enactment of a special law to deal with violence against healthcare personnel and implementation of improved safety protocols. —*PTI*

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PHOTO: PTI

# Israeli strike kills 28 as Blinken travels to Gaza

**DEIR AL-BALAH, 18 AUG**

Israeli strikes across Gaza killed 28 people overnight and into Sunday, including young quadruplets, local health officials said, as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken headed to the region to try to seal a cease-fire deal after months of negotiations. The US and fellow mediators Egypt and Qatar said they were closing in on a deal after two days of talks in Doha, with American and Israeli officials expressing cautious optimism. But Hamas has signalled resistance to what it called new demands by Israel. The evolving proposal calls for a three-phase process in which Hamas would release all hostages abducted during its 7 October attack, which triggered the deadliest war fought between Israelis and Palestinians. —*PTI*

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**MUDA SCAM**

# Cong to stage statewide protests today, CM convenes meeting

**BENGALURU, 18 AUG**

Congress in Karnataka will stage protests across State on Monday against Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot granting permission to prosecute Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the alleged site allotment scam in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

The Chief Minister has convened a Congress Legislative Party (CLP) meeting on 22 August in the wake of Karnataka According to a statement issued by the chief minister's office, the meeting will be held in Vidhana Souda conference Hall.

"The meeting is related to the MUDA developments. The chief minister will brief the Congress legislators about the facts of the case and will chalk out a strategy to fight the case legally and politically," a source in the Chief Minister House told PTI.

CM has convened the Congress Legislative Party meet on 22 Aug **PHOTO: PTI**

Gehlot granted permission to prosecute Siddaramaiah, acting on complaints by three private individuals.

In the MUDA 'scam', it is alleged that compensatory sites were allotted to Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi in an upmarket area in Mysuru, which had higher property value compared to the location of her land, which had been "acquired" by MUDA. Under the controversial scheme, MUDA allotted 50 per cent of developed land in lieu of undeveloped land acquired from them for forming residential layouts. —*PTI*

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# CHAMPAI IN DELHI, AMID RUMOURS OF SWITCH TO BJP

**RANCHI, 18 AUG**

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader Champai Soren on Sunday said he experienced "bitter humiliation" as chief minister, which compelled him to seek an alternative path. His comment came shortly after he reached Delhi amid speculation about a potential switch to the BJP.

"After so much humiliation, I was forced to look for an alternative path," Champai posted on his social media accounts. He alleged that all his government programmes in the first week of July were abruptly cancelled by the party leadership without his knowledge. Soren claimed that although the Chief Minister had the authority to call a meeting of the legislative party, he was not even informed of the meeting's agenda. Champai emphasised that this is his personal battle and he does not intend to involve any party members or harm the organisation. —*PTI*

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## Cops summon ex-BJP MP, doctors for 'spreading rumours' on autopsy

Kolkata Police have issued summonses to former BJP MP Locket Chatterjee and two renowned doctors for allegedly spreading rumours and disclosing the identity of the woman doctor who was raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, an officer said. Apart from these three people, the police have also issued summonses to 57 others for spreading wrong information about the incident, he said. —*PTI*

**ON ALERT**

# Five Zika virus cases detected in Bengaluru

**BENGALURU, 18 AUG**

Seven cases of Zika virus, including five at Jigani in Bengaluru, were detected in Karnataka from 4 to 15 August, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said on Sunday.

Health and Family Welfare Department has issued an advisory labelling Jigani as a containment zone and asked pregnant women to take extra caution. The department has collected blood samples from the infected individuals' family members. Testing was being conducted in a 3km radius of the affected households, and the 1km area around those homes has been designated as a containment zone. The department has called on the public to remain calm but vigilant. Of the seven cases detected, one is from Shivamogga and other is from Kodagu. In July a 64-year-old resident of Shivamogga died after getting infected with Zika. —*Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

### Symptoms of Zika Virus

Symptoms usually appear 3–14 days after infection and last for 2–7 days. Most people infected with Zika don't develop symptoms or only have mild symptoms

- Headaches
- Red eyes
- Fever
- Blisters
- Rashes

### Diagnosis & Treatment

- Diagnosis of Zika viral infection is confirmed through blood and urine tests.
- There is no specific treatment or vaccine for Zika
- Treatment focuses on relieving symptoms, including rest and staying hydrated

PHOTO: ANI

# ICG chief Rakesh Pal dies of cardiac arrest in Chennai

**CHENNAI, 18 AUG**

Indian Coast Guard Director General Rakesh Pal on Sunday passed away due to cardiac arrest in Chennai. It learnt that he had a chest pain at INS Adyar while taking stock of preparations for the visit of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

He was rushed to Rajiv Gandhi Government General Hospital where he died around 7 pm while undergoing treatment. Reacting to the incident, Rajnath Singh took to X and expressed his grief over passing away of Rakesh Pal. He said "Deeply saddened at the untimely demise of Shri Rakesh Pal, DG, Indian Coast Guard in Chennai today. He was an able and committed officer under whose leadership ICG was making big strides in strengthening India's maritime security. My heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family."

—*Agencies*

# Foxconn to set up battery storage unit system in India

**SRIPERUMBUDUR, 18 AUG**

Taiwanese electronics manufacturing giant Foxconn is working on plans to set up a Battery Energy Storage System unit in India, its chairman Young Liu said here. With an eye on the electric vehicle segment, Foxconn has been expanding its battery manufacturing business, with the first plant already set up in Taiwan.

Liu said that Foxconn's information and communication technology segment has just started in India. Meanwhile, Foxconn's business in India has grown to over USD 10 billion till 2024, its Liu said here. Foxconn has invested USD 1.4 billion in India till date, according to the company. —*PTI*

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PHOTO: PTI

**NO COMPROMISE ON LAW**

# *Civil code not acceptable: Muslim Board*

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board has stated that a uniform or secular civil code is not acceptable to Muslims as they will never compromise with Sharia Law (Muslim Personal Law).

"The All India Muslim Personal Law Board considers the Prime Minister's call, on the occasion of Independence Day, for a Secular Civil Code and terming religious personal laws as communal ones is highly objectionable," said an All India Muslim Personal Law Board press release.

The Board in no uncertain terms makes it clear that it is unacceptable to Muslims as they will never compromise with Sharia Law (Muslim Personal Law).

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board members hold a press conference, at Press Club of India in New Delhi on Sunday **PHOTO: ANI**

"All India Muslim Personal Law Board's spokesperson, Dr SQR Ilyas, in a press statement expressed shock at the PM's announcement to term Personal Laws based on religion, as communal ones and to further replace them by a Secular Civil Code," they said in the release.

He called it a well-thought-out conspiracy. The Board considers it important to mention that the Muslims of India have made it clear many times that their family laws are based on Sharia, which no Muslim can deviate from, at any cost and added that the Legislature of the country itself, has approved the Shariat Application Act, 1937, and the Constitution of India has declared it a fundamental right under Article 25 to profess propagate and practice religion. "He said, the family laws of other communities are also based on their own religious and ancient traditions. So, tampering with them and trying to create secular ones for all is basically a negation of religion and an imitation of the West," as per the release.

He explained that such absolute powers should not be exercised by the elected representatives of the country. —*ANI*

## Four of family die as car rams into bus in Gadag

GADAG, 18 AUG

Four members of a family died as a car rammed into a private bus on Hubballi-Bagalkot highway in Dharwad district at 6.30am on Sunday. The deceased are Haveri native Rudrappa Angadi, 55, his wife Rajeshwari, 45, daughter Aishwarya, 16, and son Vijaya, 12. The family was on their way to Basaveshwara Temple in Kallapura, Shivamogga district, from Haveri, while the bus was going from Ilkal in Bagalkot district to Hubbali. The accident took place when the car was trying to overtake another vehicle and collided head-on with the bus, according to a preliminary investigation. The bus lost control and veered off the road, eventually landing in a ditch. Both the vehicles were travelling at high speeds at the time of the accident, the investigation revealed. The front of the bus sustained minor damage. With the help of residents and police, the bodies were taken to hospital for postmortem. The bus crew fled the scene after the accident, according to witnesses. *—Salar News*

## 3 held for trafficking tusks in Chamarajanagar

MYSURU, 18 AUG

Chamarajanagar Forest Mobile Squad has arrested three people on charges of trafficking a pair of tusks on a car near PG Palya main road in Chamarajanagar taluk on Sunday. On a tip-off, the officials seized the tusks and impounded the car used for the crime. The accused are Shivamurthy, 57, a resident of Ankashettypura of Chamarajanagar taluk; Shivakumar, 44, a resident of Ravanapuram, Tirupur district of Tamil Nadu; and Chinnakavundan Antony, 46, of Andipalyam of Tirupur district. The forest mobile squad was led by its PSI Vijayraj. The accused were remanded in judicial custody. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

## Angry with stunts, Mob throws bike from City flyover

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

Angry with bikers performing stunts on the busy Tumakuru National Highway, people intercepted at least of them and threw their bikes on the ground from a flyover recently. Onlookers made a video of the incident and it has gone viral. It is not known when the incident occurred but, according to some people, it took place on 15 August. The video shows people gathered in large numbers on the flyover and screaming and shouting at the bikers performing stunts, such as wheelies, and then throwing the two bikes, including a scooter, over the flyover. One of the people standing below the bridge watching the developments made the video. One can hear people abusing the bikers and hailing the public anger. *—PTI*

# MUDA scam: Cong to stage statewide protests today

### Guv has ordered to prosecute CM for his role in MUDA scam

Members of progressive and AHINDA organisations, Karnataka State Backward Classes Awareness Forum and others will hold a rally on Monday to support CM Siddaramaiah PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

Congress in Karnataka will stage protests across State on Monday against the permission given by Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to prosecute Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for his alleged role in MUDA 'scam'.

"The protest rallies will be held in all district headquarters across the State," said Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, who is also the Congress State President, here on Sunday.

He alleged that the Governor was making a case out of nothing and this was a "murder of democracy". Shivakumar said he has instructed the party leaders to carry out peaceful protests and ensure that anti-social elements do not infiltrate the rallies and create trouble.

About the meeting with AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge, he said, "We briefed him today (on Sunday) about the developments in the State." The Deputy Chief Minister on Saturday called upon his party leaders and workers to take out a kilometre-long march to the taluk and district level offices and submit memoranda addressed to the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, against the Governor's move. "You all know that the BJP and the JD(S) are hatching a big conspiracy against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. It's our duty to fight against it," he said in a post on 'X'.

Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit also weighed in, calling the case against Siddaramaiah "fake". He said the flats Siddaramaiah received were through compensation. "They should prove that there was something wrong with the compensation provided to Siddaramaiah. And if there was something wrong, BJP was in power at that time. Why did they give the compensation?" he asked.

Members of progressive and AHINDA organisations, Karnataka State Backward Classes Awareness Forum and others will hold a rally on Monday to support Siddaramaiah. They were also planning to hold a bandh in Mysuru on Wednesday and Thursday. His supporters in T Narasipura and Varuna Assembly segments will observe a bandh at T Narasipura on Monday and will also block roads, State highways to register their protest. Members of District Congress Committee will hold a rally titled 'Governor Hatao, Karnataka Bachao' at Gandhi Square in Mysuru on Monday. *—Salar News*

## Senior advocates Singhvi, Kapil Sibal to meet CM

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

As Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot has granted permission to prosecute Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment scam, senior advocates Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Kapil Sibal will arrive in Bengaluru on Saturday, sources in the Chief Minister's office said on Sunday.

The two top Supreme Court lawyers will meet the Siddaramaiah and may appear on his behalf in the special court for public representatives, the sources added.

Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge refused to name the lawyers but dropped hints that constitutional experts will be flown in to Bengaluru.

"We will tackle it. We have the best constitutional experts being flown in. We have a lot of people within the state who are helping the government with this and we will take it up," Kharge told reporters here. The Chief Minister is facing a legal hurdle after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot granted permission on Saturday to prosecute him in the alleged alternative site scam in the MUDA on a complaint given by three activists. While Opposition BJP and its ally JD(S) have cried foul, the Chief Minister has refuted the charge saying it is baseless and malicious to defame him. *—PTI*

AHEAD OF RAKHI

Youngsters purchase Rakhis on the eve of Rakshabandhan in Bengaluru on Sunday PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

# HDK challenges CM to approach SC in mining case

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Sunday challenged the State government to approach the Supreme Court against him instead of seeking Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's permission to prosecute him.

"What is the need to prosecute me? For how long have you been doing this drama?" Kumaraswamy asked, reacting to Siddaramaiah's accusation.

The Chief Minister in a press conference on Saturday said that on 23 November, 2023, the Lokayukta sent a report to the governor seeking permission to prosecute Kumaraswamy, who presently holds the steel and heavy industries portfolio at the Centre, but no permission was granted in a 2007 mining case.

He said the Supreme Court has said that in the Janthakal mining case that "no other court shall pass any other order with regard to these matters till the matters are finally decided by the honourable Supreme Court".

> **What is the need to prosecute me? For how long have you been doing this drama?**
>
> —HD Kumaraswamy, Union Minister

"Who is stopping you from approaching the Supreme Court? Why this drama of sending the file to the governor seeking permission for my prosecution — to scare me and to silence me? Is this what you have done?" Kumaraswamy asked.

He said the present government had sent the report to the governor to prosecute him when it was clear that one has to approach the Supreme Court. *—PTI*

IN SOLIDARITY

West Bengal natives residing in City with other volunteers protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Sunday against the rape and murder of a resident doctor at RG Kar hospital in Kolkata PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

# Mysuru Youth summit brainstorms on climate change

MYSURU, 18 AUG

Around 250 participants below 35 years of age from across the country participated in a four-day conference on climate change at BN Bahadur Institute of Management Sciences in Mysuru on Sunday.

The participants from diverse backgrounds, including farmers, indigenous youth and persons with disabilities, took part in the local conferences of youth (LCOY) hosted by YOUNGO, an organisation under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

They took part in capacity development sessions, discussed national campaigns, shared stories on climate change, undertook educational field visits conducted workshops, and poster competitions. Addressing the participants, Rita Khanna, a scientist under Union Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change, said: "Children and young people must be at the centre of climate action taken by governments and stakeholders; their voices and opinions on building climate resilience and driving meaningful action and leadership in climate policy and practice must be considered."

Dr Zelalem Birhanu Taffesse, Chief of UNICEF Field Officer for Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana, said, "The climate crisis is a child rights crisis as children and young people bear the brunt despite being least responsible for it. A National Youth and Children's Statement aims at drawing the attention of the Government of India to the impact and actions to build climate resilience while bringing in the experience and voice of grassroots climate champions," she said. *—Salar News*

## 1ST TRIAL RUN ON NAGASANDRA-MADAVARA LINE BEGINS

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

The first trial run of Namma Metro's Green Line between Nagasandra and Madavara (Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre) was conducted on Sunday morning.

The trains were run as part of signal testing, with speeds ranging from 5 to 35 km per hour during the trial, a statement from Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited said. The 3.7km extension adds three new stations — Manjunath Nagar, Jindal, and Madavara — providing more accessibility to residents in Tumakuru, Makali, Nelamangala and beyond.

The metro extension is expected to ease traffic congestion on Nelamangala-Bengaluru Highway and offer a convenient option for those commuting between Tumakuru and Bengaluru. This trial run marks the completion of the Reach 3C extension. The project, which began in 2017, faced delays primarily due to land acquisition, pushing the completion timeline to 2024. The commercial operations on this line are likely to begin in early September, with a potential inauguration on Gandhi Jayanti, 2 October, 2024. *—Salar News*

## 40-year-old tree axed in RR Nagar

PHOTO: SALAR

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

A healthy rain tree, which stood tall in Sachidananda Nagar, 1st Main Road, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, for more than 40 years, was chopped down on Saturday by a wood contractor without following due procedures.

A group of residents have filed a complaint with Rajarajeshwari Nagar Police against Deputy Conservator of Forests in BBMP Forest Cell over the tree felling.

On 12 August, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) Forest Cell issued an order to fell the tree and contractor BN Prasanna Kumar chopped down the tree, sparking outrage among residents and environmentalists, a statement said. According to protocol, the zonal forest officer is required to visit the location and submit a report before any such decision is made; however, the officer concerned didn't do so. It has been alleged that the contractor influenced BBMP officials to get the order passed, using his connections with a political leader, residents said.

GR Banuprakash, Deputy Conservator of Forests in BBMP Forest Cell, dispatched an officer to investigate the incident. Speaking to **Salar News,** Shankar Narayan, 74, a resident, said he tried to prevent the tree from being felled. "This tree was vital for our community, and it did no harm to anyone," he said. Another resident of the area, Raju S, said: "This was a daylight eco-crime, and we must hold those responsible accountable."

Citizens can complaint about illegal tree felling by emailing to dcfbbmp12@gmail.com, comm@bbmp.gov.in, cm.kar@nic.in or pccfkar@gmail.com. *—Salar News*

7 BOOKED

# *Movers and packers firm accused of ₹8L theft*

The complainant Ankit Mayank posted a video on X saying some of the items were stolen and some were destroyed PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

BENGALURU, 18 AUG

Movers and packers company 'Halef International Pvt Ltd' has been accused of stealing items valued at more Rs 10 lakh during a house shifting in State on 14 August.

The incident came to light when Bengaluru resident Ankit Mayank shared his ordeal on X. Mayank said a bag valued at Rs 8 lakh, Rs 2 lakh in cash, a pair of gold earrings, two gold bangles and other valuable items were missing apart from damage of the assets. The post includes a video showing the chaotic state of their new home. Trollies, bags and suitcases were scattered around in disarray, with important documents strewn across the floor.

Vidyaranyapura police said seven were booked.

- The incident came to light when Bengaluru resident Ankit Mayank shared his ordeal on X. The post includes a video showing the chaotic state of their new home

The company wrote on X: "@mr_mayank didn't inform while booking the services with us that he is availing the service for the transportation of cash, jewellery, antique and ancient valuable items as we don't encourage or entertain such goods transportation... This couple is clearly attempting to extort the company by manipulating their social media following and making baseless claims. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: X

## Union Min Oram's wife Jhingia dies of dengue

**BHUBANESWAR, 18 AUG**

Union Minister Jual Oram's wife Jhingia Oram died of dengue during treatment at a private hospital here, family sources said on Sunday.

Jhingia Oram, 58, is survived by her husband and two daughters. She died at about 10.50 pm on Saturday night, they said. The Union Tribal Affairs Minister himself is also down with dengue and undergoing treatment at the same hospital.

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has expressed grief over the passing away of Jhingia Oram. He visited the hospital late on Saturday night.

Apart from the Chief Minister, Odisha Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling, Speaker Surama Padhy and other BJP leaders also paid their last respects to Jhingia Oram late last night. Majhi said Jhingia was a pious, soft-spoken person, who involved herself in social and charitable works. Jual was married to Jhingia on 8 March, 1987. Her funeral will be held at their village in Sundargarh district, family sources said. *—PTI*

## Rajnath unveils coin to mark Karunanidhi's birth

**CHENNAI, 18 AUG**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh release a Rs 100 commemorative coin on the centenary of late DMK president M Karunanidhi on Sunday. Singh released the "Muthamizh Arignar Kalaignar Centenary Commemorative Coin," in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, ruling DMK president and Karunanidhi's son at an event. A host of state ministers and others will attend the event slated at the Kalaivanar Arangam here. Karunanidhi (1924-2018), a Dravidian stalwart, was a five-time chief minister of the State and helmed the DMK for nearly five decades till his death. *—PTI*

## Nepal's Foreign Minister Rana on 5-day India visit

**KATHMANDU, 18 AUG**

Nepal's new Foreign Minister Arzu Deuba Rana on Sunday embarked on a five-day official visit to India during which she will meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to discuss ways to strengthen the bilateral ties and promote cooperation. Rana is visiting India at the invitation of Jaishankar, the foreign ministry said in a statement. This is Rana's first official visit to a foreign country after assuming charge. "During the visit, Rana will hold a bilateral meeting with her Indian counterpart Jaishankar and discuss matters of mutual interest for strengthening Nepal-India relations. *—PTI*

## NC to announce candidates for first phase of J&K polls

**SRINAGAR, 18 AUG**

National Conference party will announce its candidates for the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir after the notification for the first phase of the three-phased polls, the party's vice president Omar Abdullah said here on Sunday. The notification for the first phase is scheduled to be issued on 20 August. Polling is scheduled to take place on 18 September. To a question about BJP's charge that the NC was showing overconfidence after Abdullah told a private TV news channel that the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, in its first order of business after elections, will pass a resolution against the Centre's decision to strip the region of its Statehood and special status, the NC leader said it does not behove the BJP to talk about overconfidence. Meanwhile, a former PDP legislator from Karnah, Javid, joined NC. *—PTI*

# J'KHAND CM ACCUSES BJP OF POACHING MLAS

### This comes amid speculations of Soren switching sides to BJP

**GODDA, 18 AUG**

Amid speculation that JMM leader Champai Soren could join the BJP, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Sunday accused the saffron camp of "poaching" MLAs and "dividing society".

Soren's statement came hours after JMM legislator and former chief minister Champai Soren reached Delhi.

Addressing a government function in Jharkhand's Godda district, Hemant Soren alleged that the BJP brought people from Gujarat, Assam and Maharashtra to "spread poison among the tribals, Dalits, backward classes and minorities and make them fight with each other".

"Forget about society, these people work to break families and parties. They poach MLAs. Money is such a thing that it doesn't take long for politicians to move here and there," he said.

Notably, Champai Soren left for Delhi on Sunday, amid speculations that he is likely to join the BJP, sources said.

A close associate of Champai Soren claimed that the former chief minister left for the national capital from Kolkata.

Soon after landing in Delhi, the JMM leader told reporters that he hadn't met any BJP leader and was in the national capital on a "personal" visit.

Hemant Soren also said that the assembly elections in Jharkhand are due this year but the poll schedule would be "decided by the opposition party in the state, not by the Election Commission".

"It seems the EC is no longer a constitutional institution, as it has been occupied by BJP people," he alleged.

"I challenge them (BJP) that if the assembly elections are held today, they will be wiped out from Jharkhand tomorrow," he said. *—PTI*

> **The ruling alliance will not have any problem as Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren will be the face of the INDIA bloc in the assembly poll this year. But this will certainly create a fissure among BJP leaders.**
>
> —Ajoy Kumar, Congress leader

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren during a programme for the inauguration of developmental schemes, in Godda, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

**30L TREES IN 100 DAYS**

# Shah launches ₹1,003 cr project to save trees in Gujarat

**AHMEDABAD, 18 AUG**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday launched development projects costing Rs 1,003 crore in Gujarat's Ahmedabad city and appealed to the people to join the nationwide tree plantation campaign to protect the environment.

Highlighting the importance of trees to protect the environment and the ozone layer, Shah said the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has taken the pledge to plant 30 lakh trees in 100 days for the coming generation, and he is closely associated with the campaign.

"This is a beautiful campaign, and it is a big thing that a municipal corporation will plant 30 lakh trees. But I would like to ask the citizens of Ahmedabad as to what will be your contribution?" he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called for the people to dedicate a tree in the name of their mother, and there is no other option than this to get rid of the debt "we owe to our mothers", the minister said.

Amit Shah *PHOTO: PTI*

Shah inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 45 different projects costing Rs 1,003 crore, including two oxygen plants, waste collection vans, sewage treatment plants, a gymnasium and swimming pool, urban health centres, a yoga-cum-meditation centre, smart schools and aanganwadis (women and child care centres), in Ahmedabad.

Meanwhile, Shah also said a large number refugees were denied citizenship rights in the country due to the appeasement policy of past governments led by Congress. The past governments allowed crores of intruders into the country and made them citizens illegally, he said. *—PTI*

# Puducherry steps up demand for statehood

**PUDUCHERRY, 18 AUG**

A long-pending demand, the plea for statehood to this union territory echoed once again in the state Assembly earlier this week, when the House passed a unanimous resolution expressing its sentiments with the Centre on the matter.

The territorial Assembly had in the past adopted resolutions on 15 occasions seeking statehood. The election manifestos of all political parties released during the run up to either Assembly or Lok Sabha polls all along had been insisting they would strive hard for ensuring statehood to Puducherry, a coastal town located about 170 km from Chennai.

Puducherry and its outlying regions of Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam located as enclaves either in Tamilnadu, Kerala or Andhra Pradesh had been together as a union territory since their merger with the Indian Union through a referendum in 1954.

Chief Minister N Rangasamy, who heads the AINRC-BJP coalition government here, has been pressing the plea for statehood as he is of the view that in the present constitutional status of Puducherry being a Union Territory, the decisions of the elected government could not be implemented expeditiously as several hurdles have to be overcome.

The territorial Assembly had in the past adopted resolutions on 15 occasions to seek statehood.

The demand for statehood has thus been intensified now more than ever with the legislators becoming optimistic of achieving the goal. *—PTI*

N Rangasamy *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

- The demand for statehood has thus been intensified now more than ever with the legislators becoming optimistic of achieving the goal

# CPI(M) attacks UDF over 'kafir row' videos

**PALAKKAD, 18 AUG**

Amidst continuing criticism against it by the United Democratic Front (UDF) over the "kafir" campaign row, the ruling Communist Party of India (Marxist) in Kerala on Sunday turned the tables to the Congress-led Opposition front and accused it of circulating "communal and objectionable videos" during the Lok Sabha polls campaign in Vadakara constituency.

CPI(M) State secretary MV Govindan alleged that the UDF had prior experience in recording such videos and circulating them.

Stating that the ruling CPI(M) and the party-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) have only one stand on the matter, the leader alleged that the Congress and the UDF were behind such campaigns.

Govindan's reaction came amidst the Congress continuing to accuse the CPI(M) of carrying out a communal campaign in Vadakara constituency during the Lok Sabha polls through the "kafir" campaign hours before polling for the seat was to commence.

The issue in question pertains to a social media post put up ahead of the Vadakara election that reportedly asked people not to vote for LDF candidate KK Shailaja as she was a "kafir" (non-believer).

Terming it a hate campaign akin to a terror act which was aimed at dividing people along religious lines for political gains, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly V D Satheesan questioned why no case had been registered till date against those who spread the controversial post on social media. *—PTI*

MV Govindan *PHOTO: PTI*

# EAM calls on Kuwait PM, discusses ties

**KUWAIT CITY, 18 AUG**

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday called on Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and discussed ways to take the bilateral ties to a higher level.

Jaishankar, who arrived here on Sunday on a day-long visit, appreciated Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah's perspectives on the deepening of India-Kuwait ties and conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

EAM S Jaishankar with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya during a meeting, in Kuwait, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

The bilateral ties and ways of boosting cooperation were touched on during the meeting.

Jaishankar's visit will enable both sides to review various aspects of India-Kuwait bilateral relations. *—PTI*

# Ajit Pawar shown black flags at yatra; NCP demands clarification

**PUNE, 18 AUG**

A group of people showed black flags to Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar during his Jan Samman Yatra in Junnar area of Pune district on Sunday.

Some people among the protesters, who carried BJP flags, criticised Pawar for holding an official function and "sidelining" the allies.

NCP spokesperson Amol Mitkari sought a clarification over the incident from BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis.

The NCP, BJP and Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde are constituents of the ruling 'Mahayuti' in the State.

- NCP spokesperson Amol Mitkari sought a clarification over the incident from BJP l eader Devendra Fadnavis

"Those who showed black flags should also do it separately. Devendra Fadnavis should immediately clarify on this incident," the leader said.

**Had to go with Ajit as my bank faced troubles: NCP MLA**

NCP MLA Rajendra Shingne has claimed that due to troubles faced by a cooperative bank with which he was associated, he had to side with Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar after the party split last year.

"However, of late, due to troubles faced by my district cooperative bank (in Buldhana) and helplessness, I had to go to them (ruling side) with Ajit Dada. Today, the district cooperative bank has received Rs 300 crore from the government. But certainly, Pawar saheb will always be venerable to me," Shingne said. *—PTI*

## B'DESH POLITICAL ANALYSTS URGE INDIA TO REFIX TIES WITH DHAKA

**DHAKA, 18 AUG**

India will benefit if it supports the current transition government in Bangladesh and moves to build relationships with other political parties instead of "focussing on one person and party", political analysts, foreign relations and security experts said on Sunday.

"I think understanding should be the starting point for resetting our relationship, having that we have our interdependence, so we need each other to recalibrate our relationship," head of the leading think tank Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) Humayun Kabir told PTI.

He said being Bangladesh's next-door neighbour, India was "always with us when we were in difficulty and in the current transition also if they come and support us then I think people of Bangladesh will look at India as a friend".

The analysts said the chemistry between Hasina and Modi was very good with India depending on Hasina over the past 16 years for cementing bilateral ties ignoring other political groups. *—PTI*

## CH'GARH CONG MLA ARRESTED IN ARSON CASE

**DURG/BALODABAZAR, 18 AUG**

Congress MLA Devendra Yadav has been arrested in connection with violence in Chhattisgarh's Balodabazar city on 10 June during a Satnami community agitation, a police official said.

Yadav has accused BJP government of implicating Congress workers in the arson case.

The legislator was apprehended from his residence in Durg district and brought to Balodabazar, the headquarters of Balodabazar-Bhatapara district, where he was arrested on Saturday, Superintendent of Police Vijay Agrawal said.

Yadav, an influential young face of the party, is a second-term MLA from Bhilai Nagar constituency..

Yadav was produced in a local court which remanded him to judicial custody till 20 August.

According to sources, police had summoned Yadav at least three times to record his statement but he did not cooperate, following which he was apprehended.

The influential Satnami community, founded by medieval-era social reformer Baba Guru Ghasidas, represents the largest Scheduled Castes group in Chhattisgarh. *—PTI*

**BYPOLLS 2024**

# *UP BJP hopes to win, experts say not easy*

**LUCKNOW, 18 AUG**

Following a setback in the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP has vowed to win all 10 assembly seats, where by-elections are to be held, underlining its dominance in the state and sending a message to the Opposition that its recent resurgence was short-lived.

Political observers, however, say it could be an uphill task for the ruling NDA alliance.

Bypolls are to be held on 10 seats that fell vacant after nine MLAs were elected as MPs in this year's Lok Sabha elections and the MLA of Sishamau was convicted and given a seven-year jail sentence. However, the dates for the polls have not been announced yet.

BJP state vice-president and Legislative Council member Vijay Bahadur Pathak told PTI that even though the by-election dates have not been decided, "the party has started extensive preparations."

In the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP won 33 seats — a massive drop from the 62 it had won in 2019. Its allies RLD and Apna Dal (S) managed three more seats taking the alliance tally to 36.

The state's main Opposition party Samajwadi Party (SP), meanwhile, won 37 seats, the Congress won six and another seat was won by Azad Samaj Party Kanshi Ram.

EC has said that the by-election dates have not been decided yet due to bad weather and natural disasters, and as soon as the situation improves, elections will be held within six months. *—PTI*

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with other BJP workers. *PHOTO: PTI*

# Rahul slams lateral entry in top government jobs

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday termed as an "anti-national step" the government's move of recruiting public servants through lateral entry, alleging that the reservation of SCs, STs and OBCs is being "openly snatched away" by such an action.

The former Congress president also alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is "attacking the Constitution by recruiting public servants through the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh instead of the Union Public Service Commission".

INDIA bloc will strongly oppose this "anti-national step" that hurts both the administrative structure and social justice, Gandhi said.

"Privatisation of the IAS is Modi's guarantee for ending reservation," he said.

Meanwhile, Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have slammed the government's move seeking applications for lateral entry into the bureaucracy, terming it as the BJP'S "conspiracy". *—PTI*

Rahul Gandhi *PHOTO: PTI*

## Several Jaipur hospitals get email bomb threats

**JAIPUR, 18 AUG**

Several Hospitals in Jaipur received email bomb threats on Sunday, police said. Bomb disposal squad teams have been dispatched to the hospitals. The emails claimed that bombs had been planted under hospital beds and in bathrooms. "So far, four hospitals have said that they received such (bomb threat) emails. More hospitals are likely to confirm as and when they check email. The email sent to the hospitals read, "I placed the bomb in the hospital building. The bombs are hidden under hospital beds and inside bathrooms. Every person inside the hospital will be killed or will lose limbs. None of you will escape." "You will end up in a pool of blood. You all deserve nothing but death. 'Ching and Cultist' are behind this MASSACRE," it said. *—PTI*

## HC denies to quash case against flag disrespect row

**PRAYAGRAJ, 18 AUG**

Allahabad High Court has refused to quash criminal proceedings against six people accused of carrying a tricolour with Quranic verses during a religious procession, saying such incidents could be exploited by those who seek to create communal discord. Dismissing the petition filed by Gulamuddin and five others, Justice Vinod Diwakar said the act was punishable under the Flag Code of India, 2002, and there was a violation of the Prevention of Insults of National Honour Act, 1971. Stressing that the tricolour symbolises unity and diversity of the nation, transcending religious, ethnic and cultural differences, the court observed, . Act of disrespect towards the 'tiranga' can have far-reaching social cultural implications. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

## Actor Mohanlal hospitalised due to breathing issues

**KOCHI, 18 AUG**

Malayalam superstar Mohanlal has been admitted to a private hospital in Kochi after he complained of fever and breathlessness, according to sources. The veteran Malayalam film star has been advised by the hospital to avoid public interactions and follow a prescribed course of medications for the next five days. "This is to certify that I have examined Mr Mohanlal, 64 years old male, MRD No 1198168. He is having complaints of high-grade fever, breathing difficulty and generalised myalgia. He is suspected to have a viral respiratory infection. He has been advised to take medications with 5 days rest and to avoid crowded places," read the medical statement. *—Salar News*

## UP: 2 held for 'murder' of water department official

**SULTANPUR, 18 AUG**

An assistant engineer of the Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam and his aide were arrested on Sunday after an encounter with police in connection with the alleged murder of an executive engineer of the department here, officials said. Ad hoc assistant engineer Amit Kumar and his aide Pradeep were shot in the legs during the encounter, police said. As a police team surrounded the accused, the duo opened fire. Police said the accused from Bihar have been hospitalised. They were trying to flee after allegedly killing executive engineer Santosh Kumar, 40, over a dispute, police said. In the police complaint, the brother of the deceased claimed that Santosh Kumar was planning to blacklist a firm working under the Jal Jeevan Mission. *—PTI*

# States to provide 2-hourly reports on docs

### Home ministry said the law & order situation should be monitored in view of protests

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

The Union Home Ministry has asked all state police forces to provide it situation reports every two hours in the wake of protests by doctors, nursing staff and others against the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

In a communication to the state police forces, the home ministry said that the law and order situation of all states should be monitored in view of the protests.

"Henceforth, a continuous two-hourly law and order situation report in this regard may kindly be sent to the MHA control room (New Delhi) by Fax/ Email/ WhatsApp from 1600 hours today," the communication sent on Friday said.

On 9 August, a postgraduate trainee doctor was allegedly raped and murdered while on duty at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. A civic volunteer of Kolkata Police was arrested in connection with the crime the next day. The Calcutta High Court handed over the case to the CBI on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, healthcare services remained affected across West Bengal for the tenth consecutive day on Sunday as agitating junior doctors at state-run hospitals continued their cease-work.

As the outpatient departments (OPDs) at government hospitals are closed on Sundays, the rush was less even as senior doctors were attending the emergency department to provide treatment to the visiting patients.

CBI officials have asked former principal of state-run RG Kar Medical and College and Hospital, Sandip Ghosh, to appear before them for questioning for the third consecutive day.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has begun the psychological testing of the main accused in the rape and murder case. *—PTI*

Medical students holds placards during a protest against the rape and killing of a trainee doctor at a government hospital in Kolkata, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

### Kolkata cops not to allow any gathering near RG Kar hospital till 24 Aug

Kolkata Police imposed prohibitory orders near state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital from Sunday till 24 August, banning meetings and assembly of more than five people, an order stated. The hospital had become the centre of agitation following the rape and murder of a woman doctor in the medical establishment. Kolkata Police has clamped Section 163 (2) of BNSS around the hospital. *—PTI*

## TMC MP summoned after he demands CBI grilling of top cop

**KOLKATA, 18 AUG**

- Kolkata Police asked Roy to appear before its officers at its headquarters in Lalbazar at 4 pm on Sunday for allegedly posting wrong information of the incident

Kolkata Police on Sunday summoned TMC MP Sukhendu Sekhar Roy, hours after he demanded that the CBI interrogate Kolkata Police commissioner and former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital. Roy had earlier in the day called upon the Central Bureau of Investigation, which is probing the rape and murder of a woman doctor at state-run RG Kar MCH, to act fairly and demanded the custodial interrogation of former principal of the medical establishment and the CP to know "who and why floated the suicide story".

Kolkata Police asked Roy to appear before its officers at its headquarters in Lalbazar at 4 pm on Sunday for allegedly posting wrong information regarding the incident, a police source said. Asked if the summons had anything to do with Roy's comment on the CP, the source declined to reply but said that the TMC MP had, a couple of days back, made a comment on sniffer dogs being taken to RG Kar MCH by Kolkata Police during their investigation into the doctor's death.

The parents of the deceased woman doctor claimed that they were informed over the phone that their daughter died by suicide at the hospital.

Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal has stated that no one from the police force had called up the parents to say that their daughter died by suicide. *—PTI*

> **With deep anguish over delay in justice to the Kolkata rape and murder victim, I have penned a heartfelt plea to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal**
> -Harbhajan Singh, AAP RS MP

## Speeding Mercedes kills cyclist in Delhi, driver held

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

A man died after he was allegedly mowed down by a speeding Mercedes car here in southeast Delhi, police said on Sunday. The driver of the car was arrested later, they said.

According to the victim's family members, the car allegedly hit his cycle from behind and it was dragged on the road for several metres.

The 35-year-old victim died on spot after the accident Saturday morning while the driver of the car, Pradeep Gautam, 45, from Noida, fled from the scene with his vehicle, police said.

The accident happened near Bhogal Flyover in Ashram area when the victim was on his way to work, they said.

"The victim was identified as Rajesh from Rae Bareli in Uttar Pradesh," a senior police officer said.

The officer said he worked as a gardener in Jor Bagh area. Rajesh rode his cycle almost 20 kilometres from Madanpur Khadar to Jor Bagh, a family member said.

Jeet Lal, brother-in-law of the victim, demanded strict action against the accused.

"We want justice and strict action against the accused. We also got to know that the driver of the vehicle was drunk," he added. *—PTI*

## AIR INDIA CABIN CREW ASSAULTED AT LONDON HOTEL BY AN INTRUDER

**NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, 18 AUG**

A female cabin crew member of Air India was allegedly assaulted by an intruder at a London hotel earlier this week, according to sources. The airline is pursuing the matter with the local police. In a statement, an Air India spokesperson said it was "deeply anguished by an unlawful incident of intrusion at a hotel, operated by a major international chain, that affected one of our crew members". Sources in the know said a homeless man barged into the room at the hotel where the female cabin crew was staying and assaulted her. As she shouted, others staying nearby came and rescued her and the person was caught, they added. *—PTI*

## Udaipur stabbing: Victim's kin claims hosp visit denied

**JAIPUR, 18 AUG**

Family members of the boy whose stabbing by a classmate triggered communal violence in Udaipur took part in a rally in the city on Sunday, alleging that they were not being allowed to see the victim at the hospital.

A large number of people, including family members of the boy, were part of the rally that began at Udaipur's Mukherjee Nagar Chowk. Raising slogans, the rally reached MB Hospital, demanding that the family members be allowed to see the boy.

Udaipur SP Yogesh Goyal said, "There was some confusion that family members cannot meet the boy. But, they are allowed to do so."

The SP said that while mobile internet services continue to remain suspended considering the law and order situation, market were open on Sunday. Additional police force has also been deployed in the area.

A Class-10 student allegedly stabbed another boy -- both minors -- at a government school on Friday, triggering communal violence in the city. *—PTI*

## 10 killed, 27 injured in road accident in UP

**BULANDSHAHR, 18 AUG**

Ten people were killed and 27 injured when a pickup van collided head-on with a private bus in the Salempur area here on Sunday, officials said.

The accident occurred on the Budaun-Meerut state highway, around 14 kilometres from the district headquarters. The traffic on the road was briefly affected due to the incident.

According to locals, the pickup van was coming from Ghaziabad when it collided with the bus.

The deceased were identified as Mukut Singh, 45, Deen Nath, 45, Brijesh, 18, Babu Singh, 19, Shishupal, 27, Girraj Singh, 26, Sugarpal, 35, and Omkar, 30. Two of the deceased are yet to be identified, he said.

Nine of the injured are undergoing treatment at a private hospital. The condition of four of the injured was serious and they were referred to the Meerut medical college. The remaining injured have been admitted to the district hospital, Singh said. He said fitness documents of both vehicles were updated. *—PTI*

A damaged pickup van after its collision with a bus, in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh, on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

## Sriram's IAS fined Rs 3L for misleading ad by CCPA

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Consumer rights regulator CCPA has imposed a Rs 3 lakh penalty on coaching institute Sriram's IAS for publishing misleading advertisement and violating consumer rights.

The misleading advertisement was related to its claims regarding UPSC Exam 2022.

According to an official statement, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a "penalty of Rs 3 lakh for misleading advertisement on Sriram's IAS".

The decision was taken to protect and promote the rights of consumers as a class, the CCPA said.

The regulator pointed out that coaching institutes and online edtech platforms use pictures and names of same successful candidates to influence prospective aspirants (consumers), without disclosing the courses opted by such candidates and length of the course so attended.

Sriram's IAS in its advertisement made claims of '200 plus selections in UPSC Civil Service Exam 2022'; 'We are India's No.1 Prestigious UPSC/IAS Coaching Institute', the regulator said quoting from the ad content.

Sriram's IAS in its response submitted the details of only 171 successful candidates against its claim of 200 plus selections in UPSC CSE 2022, the statement said.

The CCPA said that majority of candidates had already cleared Preliminary and Mains examination by himself/herself, with no contribution of Sriram's IAS. *—PTI*

**WILL JUSTICE BE SERVED?**

# 3 held after assault on woman doctor in Mumbai

**MUMBAI, 18 AUG**

Police have booked three persons, including two women, and detained two of them after a female doctor was allegedly assaulted at civic-run Sion hospital here in the early hours of Sunday, an official said.

The accused allegedly targeted the doctor when she was cleaning blood from the ear of a man at the casualty ward of the facility, officially known as Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital and Lokmanya Tilak Municipal Medical College.

The man screamed at the female doctor, triggering an argument, said the official from Sion police station.

Of those who had come with the patient, two women and a man assaulted the female doctor, prompting the hospital staff to seek police intervention, the official said.

Police registered a case against the three alleged attackers under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Maharashtra Medicare Service Persons and Medicare Service Institutions (Prevention of Violence and Damage or Loss to Property) Act. Terming the assault "alarming", the statement said their doctors' safety is "non-negotiable".

The assault comes amid a nationwide uproar over the safety of doctors in the wake of the rape-murder of a junior trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

**Man held for assaulting 8-year-old girl in Kalyan**

A man was arrested in Kalyan in Thane district for allegedly flashing and sexually assaulting an 8-year-old girl, a police official said on Sunday.

The 34-year-old man from Beturkar Pada was held on Saturday, the Mahatma Phule police official said. *—PTI*

Two women and a man assaulted the female doctor *PHOTO: PTI*

### 11-YEAR-OLD GIRL RAPED IN DELHI, ACCUSED AND HIS FATHER ARRESTED

A 22-year-old man was arrested for allegedly raping an 11-year-old daughter of his tenant in Northeast Delhi's Karawal Nagar area, police said. The accused identified as Suraj was arrested on Saturday. Earlier, police on Friday arrested the landlord who is the father of the accused. This comes as there are nationwide strikes and protests by the medical community over the rape and murder Kolkata doctor. *—PTI*

## 31 KILLED IN CLOUDBURST, FLASH FLOODS IN HP THIS MONSOON

**SHIMLA, 18 AUG**

Thirty-one people were killed in 51 events of cloudburst and flash flood between 27 June and 16 August in Himachal Pradesh during the ongoing monsoon season, the State Emergency Operation Centre said.

The monsoon arrived in Himachal Pradesh on 27 June.

Lahaul and Spiti witnessed 22 such incidents, the highest in the state, followed by 11 in Kinnaur, six in Una, three each in Kullu and Mandi, two in Sirmaur and one each in Chamba, Hamirpur, Shimla and Solan districts, it said.

According to the data, 121 houses were completely or partially damaged.

However, residents in several districts have claimed that the number of incidents of cloudburst, flash flood and landslide is much higher than the official count.

According to officials, Himachal Pradesh has suffered losses to the tune of Rs 1,140 crore so far. *—PTI*

**TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT CASE**

## *Burger King loses battle to Pune namesake*

**PUNE, 18 AUG**

US giant Burger King Corporation has lost a 13-year-old legal battle against its namesake eatery in Maharashtra's Pune after a district court here dismissed a suit filed by the company alleging trademark infringement.

Pune district judge Sunil Vedpathak, in the order on 16 August, said the city-based eatery 'Burger King' was operating even before the US burger joint opened shop in India and that the latter failed to prove the local food outlet had infringed its trademark.

The court dismissed the 2011 suit filed by the Burger King Corporation, seeking a permanent injunction restraining infringement of trademark, passing off (the trademark as theirs), as well as monetary damages.

The suit, filed against Anahita Irani and Shapoor Irani, owners of the Pune-based Burger King food joint, also sought Rs 20 lakh as damages.

On the plaintiff company's demand for permanent injunction, the court said the Burger King Corporation started to provide services through restaurants under its trademark Burger King in India particularly in the year 2014, whereas the city-based eatery was using the trademark 'Burger King' to provide restaurant services since 1991-92. The court said the Burger King Corporation has "miserably failed" to prove that the eatery here had infringed its trademark Burger King while running the restaurant in Pune.

Since there was absolutely no evidence regarding proof of infringement of the plaintiff company's trademark and actual damage caused to it, the company was not entitled for any damages, it said. *—PTI*

The suit was filed in 2011 by US giant Burget King Corporation *PHOTO: PTI*

**PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY**

Devotees carry idols of Lord Ganesha to a worship place for the Ganesha Chaturthi festival celebrations in Mumbai. The festival this year will be celebrated on 7 September
***PHOTO: PTI***

# Earth's 13-month heat streak ends, what's next?

The 13-month streak of record-breaking global warmth has ended.

From June 2023 until June 2024, air and ocean surface water temperatures averaged a quarter of a degree Celsius higher than records set only a few years previously. Air temperatures in July 2024 were slightly cooler than the previous July (0.04°C, the narrowest of margins) according to the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service.

July 2023 was in turn 0.28°C warmer than the previous record-hot July in 2019, so the remarkable jump in temperature during the past year has yet to ease off completely. The warmest global air temperature recorded was in December 2023, at 1.78°C above the pre-industrial average temperature for December – and 0.31°C warmer than the previous record. Global warming has consistently toppled records for warm global average temperatures in recent decades, but breaking them by as much as a quarter of a degree for several months is not common. The end of this streak does not diminish the mounting threat of climate change.

So what caused these record temperatures? Several factors came together, but the biggest and most important is climate change, largely caused by burning fossil fuels.

Global warming has consistently toppled records for warm global average temperatures in recent decades
***PHOTO: ANI***

**What caused the heat streak**

Temperatures typical of Earth 150 years ago are used for comparison to measure modern global warming. The reference period, 1850–1900, was before most greenhouse gases associated with global industrialisation – which increase the heat present in Earth's ocean and atmosphere – had been emitted. July 2024 was 1.48°C warmer than a typical pre-industrial July, of which about 1.3°C is attributable to the general trend of global warming over the intervening decades. This trend will continue to raise temperatures until humanity stabilises the climate by keeping fossil fuels in the ground where they belong.

But global warming doesn't happen in a smooth progression. Like UK house prices, the general trend is up, but there are ups and downs along the way. Behind much of the ups and downs is the El Niño phenomenon. An El Niño event is a reorganisation of the water across the vast reaches of the Pacific Ocean.

El Niño is so important to the workings of worldwide weather as it increases the temperature of the air on average across all of Earth's surface, not only over the Pacific. Between El Niño events, conditions may be neutral or in an opposite state called La Niña that tends to cool global temperatures. The oscillation between these extremes is irregular, and El Niño conditions tend to recur after three to seven years.

The warm El Niño phase of this cycle began to kick in a year ago, reached its peak around the end of 2023 and is now trending neutral, which is why the record-breaking streak has ended. The 2023/2024 El Niño was strong, but it wasn't super-strong. It doesn't fully explain the remarkable degree to which the past year broke temperature records. The exact influence of other factors has yet to be fully untangled. We know there is a small positive contribution from the Sun, which is in a phase of its 11-year sunspot cycle in which it radiates fractionally more energy to the Earth. Methane (also a byproduct of the fossil fuel industry, alongside cattle and wetlands) is another important greenhouse gas and its concentration in the air has risen more rapidly in the past decade than over the previous decade. Scientists are also assessing how much measures to clean up air pollution might be adding to warming, since certain particulate air pollutants can reflect sunlight and influence the formation of clouds.

**A temperature ratchet**

Across the global ocean, 2023 was a devastating summer for coral reefs and surrounding ecosystems in the Caribbean and beyond. This was followed by heavy bleaching across the Great Barrier Reef off Australia during the southern hemisphere summer. While it is El Niño years that tend to see mass mortality events on reefs around the world, it is the underlying climate change trend that is the long-term threat, as corals are struggling to adapt to rising temperature extremes. As the Pacific Ocean is now likely to revert towards La Niña conditions, global temperatures will continue to ease back, but probably not to the levels seen prior to 2023/24. El Niño acts a bit like a ratchet on global warming. A big El Niño event breaks new records and establishes a new, higher norm for global temperatures. That new normal reflects the underlying global warming trend.

A plausible scenario is that global temperatures will fluctuate near the 1.4°C level for several years, until the next big El Niño event pushes the world above 1.5°C of warming, perhaps in the early 2030s.

*—The Conversation*

**LETTERS** write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

# Genetic links of Alzheimer, heart illness found: Study

A new study has uncovered genes that could be related to heart conditions and Alzheimer's disease, suggesting that the two could have similar origins.

Researchers said that evidence increasingly links people having the heart condition with a quicker cognitive decline and a 26 per cent increased risk of dementia, affecting one's memory and thinking, and interfering with daily activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia.

Coronary artery disease is a condition in which blood flow to the heart is restricted due to narrowing of blood vessels.

Even as abnormal levels of fat in blood and inflammation could be possible shared risk factors between having coronary artery disease and developing Alzheimer's disease, the researchers at Edith Cowan University, Australia, said that the processes underlying the link remain unclear.

In this study, they employed genetic methods to examine the intricate relationship between heart disease and Alzheimer's disease.

The team chose to study seven heart disease-related factors, such as coronary artery disease and angina, and 13 lipids, including cholesterol - both 'good' and 'bad'.

Previous studies have long suggested lipids to play a role in the development of Alzheimer's disease, they said.

"Our comprehensive analysis reveals a significant and positive global genetic correlation between Alzheimer's disease and three lipid traits: LDL ('bad' cholesterol), triglycerides, and total cholesterol," the authors wrote in the study published in the International Journal of Molecular Sciences.

This suggests that certain lipids, not all, may have a more direct genetic link with Alzheimer's disease, they said.

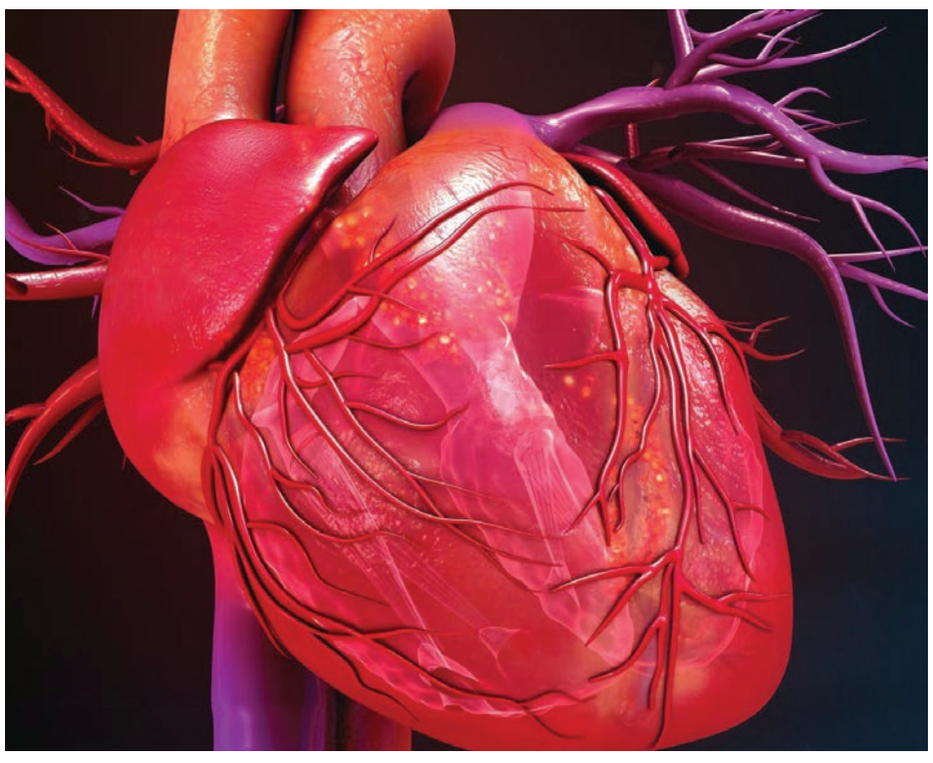
However, many of the lipids that the authors studied were genetically related with coronary artery disease.

"Specifically, we found significant genetic correlations between coronary artery disease traits and lipid profiles such as HDL, LDL, triglycerides, and total cholesterol, aligning with the existing literature that underscores the genetic interplay in cardiovascular risk factors," they wrote.

By applying genetic approaches to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between Alzheimer's disease and coronary artery disease, we have uncovered novel insights into the underlying mechanisms linking these conditions, corresponding author Emmanuel Adewuyi, from Edith Cowan University, said. *—PTI*

Study employed genetic methods to examine relationship between heart and Alzheimer's disease ***PHOTO: ALZHEMEIR'S SAN DIEGO***

- The team chose to study seven heart disease-related factors, such as coronary artery disease and angina, and 13 lipids



Coronary artery disease is a condition in which blood flow to the heart is restricted due to narrowing of blood vessels
***PHOTO: X/@PRINCE_FYNND***

# *Indian exporters feels the heat as mpox crisis looms over Africa trade*

Indian exporters are keeping their fingers crossed amid the outbreak of Monkeypox in Africa, as the continent is a crucial region for domestic exports.

According to exporters, though the spread of the disease is contained in certain countries, it would be a challenge, if it spreads to more nations.

"As of now, the spread is not rampant, but looking into the infection, the exporters are definitely concerned, hoping it will not spread," Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said.

Another exporter said that so far, there is no lockdown-like situation in the continent, and therefore, no payment delays are happening. "But, we are keeping our fingers crossed," he said.

India's leading footwear exporter and Chennai-based Farida Group Chairman Rafeeq Ahmed said the situation is not alarming, but "we are worried about the spread of the disease".

The Group has a facility in Ethiopia.

Think tank Globe Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said the direct impact of the MPox outbreak on global trade has been relatively limited so far, though the situation warrants close monitoring.

Unlike the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to strict travel bans, the current MPox situation has not necessitated such drastic measures, GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said.

However, "India must remain vigilant to the evolving situation. India should take precautionary measures to mitigate any potential disruptions in trade and ensure that its public health responses are well-coordinated to prevent the virus from impacting its economy," Srivastava said.

Currently, there are no reported cases of Monkeypox in India, even though cautionary measures will be put in place to prevent and control the spread of the disease, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

In view of the World Health Organization (WHO) again declaring Monkeypox a public health emergency of international concern on 14 August, a detailed review of the situation and the preparedness was taken last week by Union Health Minister JP Nadda at the meeting with the senior officials of his ministry.

- Union Health Ministry on Saturday said cautionary measures will be put in place to prevent and control the spread of the disease

In 2022, the WHO first declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

It was decided that as a matter of abundant caution, certain measures like sensitising the health units at all airports, seaports and ground crossings; readying the testing laboratories (32); gearing up health facilities for detecting, isolating and managing any case are put in place.

The WHO's declaration of 2022 was revoked in May 2023. Since 2022, it has globally reported 99,176 cases and 208 deaths due to Monkeypox from 116 countries.

The bilateral trade of India with Africa grew by 9.26 per cent in 2022-23 to about USD 100 billion. The exports stood at $ 51 billion, while imports were $ 47 billion.

Both sides are looking at taking the trade to $ 200 billion by 2030.

India's exports to Africa are dominated by crude oil and pharmaceutical products, accounting for nearly 40 per cent of the total exports into African markets.

Primarily, Africa exports raw materials like crude oil and minerals, gold, copper, and cashew nuts to India and imports refined petroleum, pharmaceutical products, vehicles, and telecom equipment.

*—PTI*

Exporters say the direct impact of the MPox outbreak on global trade has been relatively limited so far ***PHOTO:X/@NATIONAFRICA***

PHOTO: PTI

## Trump says he's 'better looking' than Kamala

**WASHINGTON, 18 AUG**

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has launched fresh personal attacks against his Democratic rival Kamala Harris, disparaging her physical appearance and insisting that he was "much better looking than her". The former president made the comments at a rally in Pennsylvania on Saturday while referencing a recent Time Magazine cover that features Vice President Harris. "I'm much better looking than her," Trump, 7a8, declared after criticising Time Magazine's illustrator for being "too generous" with a portrait of Harris, 59. This isn't the first time he's brought up the topic, which also came up at previous rallies. "Time Magazine doesn't have a picture of her. They have this unbelievable artist drawing her," he said. *—AP*

## Thai King endorses Paetongtarn as next PM

**BANGKOK, 18 AUG**

Thailand's King Maha Vajiralongkorn formally endorsed Paetongtarn Shinawatra as the country's next prime minister on Sunday, CNN reported. Her appointment follows a series of twists and turns in Thai politics over the past week, during which the Constitutional Court ousted Srettha Thavisin, her predecessor from the same Pheu Thai party. With the king's approval now official, Paetongtarn is set to move forward with assembling a Cabinet, a process expected to unfold in the coming weeks. Recently, the Thai Parliament voted to make Paetongtarn the next as well as the youngest-ever prime minister of Thailand, Al Jazeera reported. Shinawatra succeeds Thavisin, who was removed from his post on 14 August. *—ANI*

## Shooting kills 2, injures 2 in California

**OAKLAND, 18 AUG**

Two people were shot dead and two others injured Saturday morning after a verbal altercation, San Francisco Bay Area police said. Two of the victims died on site and two others were taken to a hospital, police said in the statement. Several people were engaged in a verbal altercation that became deadly when one of the individuals pulled out a firearm and fired multiple rounds before fleeing the scene in a vehicle, police said. Police are withholding names of the victims until next of kin are notified. Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao faces a recall election in November, as does the county's district attorney, Pamela Price. *—AP*

PHOTO: X/@PEDRINMATITA1

## French actor Alain Delon dies at 88

**PARIS, 18 AUG**

Alain Delon, the internationally acclaimed French actor who embodied both the bad guy and the policeman and made hearts throb around the world, died at age 88, French media reported. With his handsome looks and tender manner, the prolific actor was able to combine toughness with an appealing, vulnerable quality that made him one of France's memorable leading men. Delon was also a producer, appeared in plays. In the 1960s and 1970s, Delon was sought out by some of the world's top directors, from Luchino Visconti to Joseph Losey. *—AP*

# 28 killed as Blinken travels to Gaza for truce talks

### US, Egypt and Qatar say they are closing in on a deal

**DEIR AL-BALAH, 18 AUG**

Israeli strikes across Gaza killed 28 people overnight and into Sunday, including young quadruplets, local health officials said, as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken headed to the region to try to seal a cease-fire deal after months of negotiations.

The US and fellow mediators Egypt and Qatar said they were closing in on a deal after two days of talks in Doha, with American and Israeli officials expressing cautious optimism. But Hamas has signalled resistance to what it called new demands by Israel.

The evolving proposal calls for a three-phase process in which Hamas would release all hostages abducted during its 7 October attack, which triggered the deadliest war fought between Israelis and Palestinians. In exchange, Israel would withdraw its forces from Gaza and release Palestinian prisoners.

The war has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities *PHOTO: ANI*

The war has killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities, displaced the vast majority of the territory's 2.3 million residents and led experts to warn of famine and the outbreak of diseases like polio.

"It is as if we live a primitive life," said Sanaa Akela, a displaced Palestinian now in the central town of Deir al-Balah, where sewage flooded some streets.

Hamas-led militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in the October 7 attack and abducted around 250. Of those, some 110 are still believed to be in Gaza, though Israeli authorities say around a third are dead. More than 100 hostages were released in November during a weeklong cease-fire.

Israel says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas because the group conceals fighters, weapons, tunnels and rockets in residential areas. But the Israeli bombardment has wiped out entire extended families and orphaned thousands of children. *—AP*

**'N KOREAN WEAPONS USED'**

# Ukraine repels Russian missile, drone attack

**KYIV, 18 AUG**

- North Korea has long been shaping up as Russia's leading weapons supplier reportedly providing Moscow with extensive military packages

Kyiv repelled a Russian missile and drone attack in the early hours of Sunday, with city authorities saying North Korean ballistic weapons were used in the strike.

No damage or casualties have been reported in the capital.

"This is the third ballistic missile attack on the capital in August, with a clear interval of six days between the attacks," Serhii Popko, the head of Kyiv Military Administration, said in a post on Telegram.

Popko added that according to preliminary information, Russian forces "most likely used KN-23, North Korean-made ballistic missiles."

Information released later by Ukraine's Air Force said one Russian and two ballistic missiles were used in the attack, as well as five cruise missiles and eight kamikaze drones.

It added that the two North Korean ballistic missiles, three cruise missiles and all eight kamikaze drones were intercepted by Ukraine's air defenses.

The others "did not reach their desired targets" though no further information was given. Air raid sirens rang out in Kyiv twice overnight though Popko said all the missiles and drones were downed on the approaches to the capital so no explosions were heard by those in the city.

North Korea has long been shaping up as Russia's leading weapons supplier, reportedly providing Moscow with extensive military packages, including ballistic missiles and over 3 million artillery shells.

But the quality of the North Korean weapons is questionable – around half of the missiles fired at Ukraine by Russia have malfunctioned and exploded in mid-air, Reuters reported on 7 May, citing Ukraine's Prosecutor General's Office.

*Courtesy, Kyiv Independent*

# Educational institutions in B'desh reopen

**DHAKA, 18 AUG**

Bangladesh on Sunday reopened all educational institutions, including universities, secondary schools and colleges, across the country after more than a month of closure due to violence centring the student-led protests that led to the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The educational institutions in Bangladesh were closed indefinitely on 17 July to ensure the safety of students in the wake of clashes that erupted during the recent movement demanding reform of the job quota system.

The Ministry of Education on Thursday issued a directive to reopen the institutions under its jurisdiction. All the educational institutions reopened on Sunday, after a month of closure.

According to Somoy Television, a Bengali news channel based in Dhaka, "All concerned have been asked to take necessary steps to resume academic activities in all the educational institutions from 18 August following the instruction of Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus," a notification signed by deputy secretary Mosammat Rahima Akhtar, said on 15 August.

The educational institutions in Bangladesh were closed indefinitely on 17 July *PHOTO: X@MUNSIFDIGITAL*

In the morning, school students in uniform were seen going to their institutions, many accompanied by guardians, the Daily Star reported.

Many points of Dhaka city are witnessing severe traffic congestion due to the reopening of educational institutions.

The working week is from Sunday to Thursday in Bangladesh.

Initially, classes were scheduled to resume on 4 August in all government primary schools, except in the 12 city corporations and Narsingdi municipality, but this was also postponed. *—PTI*

## Hasina sued in 2013 mass murder case

An application has been filed for registering a case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 33 others, accusing them of carrying out a mass murder by indiscriminately firing on a rally n Motijheel on 5 May, 2013. Hasina is now facing 11 cases, including eight for murder, one for abduction, and two for committing crimes against humanity.

*Courtesy, Dhaka Tribune*

Chechnya warlord Ramzan Kadyrov invited Tesla CEO Elon Musk to Russia after being filmed behind Tesla's Cybertruck mounted with a machine gun. He said he would donate the vehicle to Russian forces fighting in the invasion of Ukraine *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

# Russian volcano erupts after earthquake strikes

**MOSCOW, 18 AUG**

Shiveluch volcano in Russia erupted after a 7 magnitude earthquake that struck off the eastern coast of the country, CNN reported, citing TASS.

As per the visual evaluations, the ash column is rising as high as 8 kilometres above the sea level, CNN reported, citing TASS. The report said that the volcano had released a gush of lava. No reports of injuries have been made.

Shiveluch volcano is located around 280 miles from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, a coastal city that has a population of about 181,000 that lies in Russia's Kamchatka.

The US Geological Survey (USGS) said that the earthquake's epicentre was about 55 miles from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky and had a depth of about 30 miles.

The Russian Emergencies Ministry did not issue a tsunami warning due to the tremor. However, the US Tsunami Warning System had warned that "hazardous tsunami waves from this earthquake are possible within 300km of the epicentre along the coasts of Russia."

Residents of the region left their homes due to tremors. Furniture toppled and dishes were broken due to the earthquake, TASS reported. *—ANI*

Shiveluch volcano's ash column rose 8km above the sea level after eruption. Residents are advised to take precaution *PHOTO: X/@FACTSPRIME35*

# Former-spy chief part of Imran-led conspiracy: Pak

**ISLAMABAD, 18 AUG**

The Pakistan government has accused jailed former premier Imran Khan of masterminding a political conspiracy, along with a former ISI chief and others, to sow anarchy and disharmony in the country, according to media reports.

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar claimed that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder was spreading unrest across the country and former ISI chief Lt-Gen (retd) Faiz Hameed was part of the conspiracy, the Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Hameed, who served as director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) from 2019 to 2021 when Khan was the prime minister, was arrested following action in the complaint of a private property developer over alleged misuse of official authority.

Later, several others, including three retired military officers, were also arrested in connection with the court martial of Hameed. *—PTI*

## VIETNAM PREZ ARRIVES IN CHINA

**BEIJING, 18 AUG**

Vietnamese leader To Lam started a three-day visit to China on Sunday in his first overseas trip since assuming his country's top post about two weeks ago.

Lam arrived in the morning in Guangzhou. an industrial and export hub near Hong Kong, Chinese state media reported. His agenda included visiting sites in the southern China city where former Vietnamese communist leader Ho Chi Minh spent time, the state-owned Global Times newspaper said in a social media post.

To Lam *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

He is to meet with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and other senior officials during his trip. *—AP*

# On the way to daughter's college, Indian-origin family killed in US car crash

**HOUSTON, 18 AUG**

Three members of an Indian-origin family were killed in a car accident in the US state of Texas, according to media reports.

The accident occurred on Wednesday near Lampasas County in Texas.

Arvind Mani, 45, his wife Pradeepa Arvind, 40, and their 17-year-old daughter Andril Arvind, who all were from Leander, were killed in the car crash, the Austin American Statesman reported.

Their only surviving immediate family member, 14-year-old son Adiryan, was not in the vehicle with them.

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety, a 2004 Cadillac CTS driven by 31-year-old Jacinto Gudino Duran, of Copperas Cove, was heading southbound on US Route 281 at the same time a 2024 Kia Telluride, operated by Mani, was heading northbound.

Witnesses claimed the vehicle passed them at a high speed before the collision.

The Texas Department of Public Safety said the blowout caused the driver of the Cadillac to lose control and cross over to the northbound lane into the Kia's path.

The Kia crashed into the passenger side of Cadillac, causing extensive damage to both vehicles, officials said. *—AP*

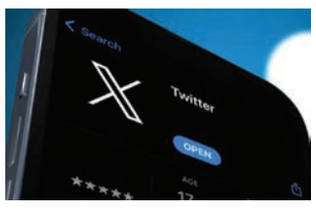


PHOTO: X

## X closes ops in Brazil, Musk blames judge for decision

**CALIFORNIA, 18 AUG**

Social media platform X said on Saturday that that it is shutting down its operations in Brazil with "immediate effect" and blamed the Brazilian top judge, Alexandre de Moraes for its decision.

The company's decision comes after a legal battle with Alexandre de Moraes over the platform's rights and responsibilities to counter disinformation, Al Jazeera reported.

The social media giant released pictures of a document allegedly signed by Moraes that says a daily fine of 20,000 reais and an arrest decree would be imposed against X representative Rachel Nova Conceicao if the platform did not fully comply with Moraes's orders, according to Al Jazeera report.

The move follows the legal battle between Moraes, who has said he is trying to fight the spread of disinformation online, and X's owner Elon Musk. *—ANI*

**FOR FIRST TIME**

# *UK plans to treat extreme misogyny as form of terrorism*

**LONDON, 18 AUG**

The UK government has ordered a so-called "rapid analytical sprint" to map and monitor extremism trends as part of a review to clamp down on radicalisation, hateful beliefs and violence against women and girls.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper told 'The Sunday Telegraph' that she has ordered the review into the government's counter-extremism strategy amid fears that extremist ideologies online and on the streets of the country have been on the rise.

It comes in the wake of a series of violent clashes involving far-right extremists across Britain. "That's why I have directed the Home Office to conduct a rapid analytical sprint on extremism, to map and monitor extremist trends, to understand the evidence about what works to disrupt and divert people away from extremist views, and to identify any gaps in existing policy which need to be addressed to crack down on those pushing harmful and hateful beliefs and violence. That work will underpin a new strategic approach to countering extremism from government, working closely with communities to build consensus and impetus for our plans," she said.

The review is said to be looking at the rise of both Islamist and far-right extremism in the UK, as well as wider ideological trends, including extreme misogyny or beliefs that fit into broader categories like fixation on violence. Officials will examine emerging ideologies which are gaining momentum and will assess any gaps in the current system which leave the country "exposed" to threats that promote violence or undermine democracy. 450 people have appeared in courts charged with the rioting and violent disorder sparked by misinformation surrounding the 17-year-old UK-born male suspect in the Southport knife attack. *—AP*

Over 450 people have appeared in courts charged with the rioting and violent disorder in UK *PHOTO: X@MARIONAWFAL*

# FOXCONN BUSINESS IN INDIA CROSSES $10 BILLION

## So far, Foxconn invested $1.4 billion in India

**SRIPERUMBUDUR, 18 AUG**

iPhone contract manufacturer Foxconn's business in India has grown to over USD 10 billion till 2024, its chairman Young Liu said here.

Foxconn has invested USD 1.4 billion in India till date, according to the company.

"So far, till last year, we have done more than USD 10 billion in business size. We will do much more in this coming year," Liu told PTI.

He was speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of the company's women-only residential complex near Foxconn's plant.

Liu, a Padma Bhushan awardee, said that during his current visit to the country he met chief ministers of several states and feels that India is on the rise.

Foxconn also plans to set up a battery storage unit in India ***PHOTO: PTI***

"After visiting so many states in India I felt that India is ascending. Foxconn wants to be a part of it. We will grow together with India's growth," Liu said.

This is Liu's first visit to India after he was conferred Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian award, on the eve of the 75th Republic Day this year.

Liu also met chief ministers and state cabinet ministers of these three states.

The women-only residential complex of the company was inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin.

The Taiwanese company recently faced allegations of discrimination in the hiring of married women. A report alleged that the electronics manufacturing giant was averse to hiring married women in India.

Foxconn had rejected the report and said that 25 per cent of its new hires were married women.. *—PTI*

**FOR 3RD STRAIGHT MONTH**

# India's holding of US securities hits high of $241.9B

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

India's holding of US government securities touched a high of USD 241.9 billion in June as the country continued to increase its exposure for the third straight month.

Japan was the top holder with securities worth over USD 1.11 trillion followed by China at the second spot with a holding valued at USD 780.2 billion in June, according to the latest data released by the US Treasury Department.

At the third place was the United Kingdom with an exposure of USD 741.5 billion ahead of Luxembourg at the fourth position with a holding to the tune of USD 384.2 billion.

Among the countries and jurisdictions, India was at the 12th place owning American government securities worth USD 241.9 billion in June, higher than USD 237.8 billion value recorded in May.

As per the data, India's holding is the highest in the last one year and it was at USD 237.8 billion in May 2024. In April this year, it touched USD 233.5 billion declining from USD 240.6 billion in March. The global economy is witnessing uncertain times amid high inflation, geopolitical tensions and other challenges. There is an uneven growth pattern and in the June quarter, the real GDP in the United States expanded at an annual rate of 2.8 per cent, higher than 1.4 per cent seen in the first three months of 2024. *—PTI*

***PHOTO: PTI***

FPIs invested Rs 9,112 crore in the debt market ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

# FPIs pull out ₹21,201 cr from equities in Aug

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Foreign investors continued their relentless selling in the Indian equity markets in August, offloading shares worth Rs 21,201 crore due to the unwinding of the yen carry trade, recession fears in the US and ongoing geopolitical conflicts.

This came after an inflow of Rs 32,365 crore in July and Rs 26,565 crore in June, data with the depositories showed.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) infused funds in these two months on the expectation of sustained economic growth, continued reform measures, better-than-expected earnings season and political stability.

Before that, FPIs withdrew Rs 25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over Rs 8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

According to the data, FPIs withdrew a net amount of Rs 21,201 crore in equities so far this month So far this year, FPIs invested Rs 14,364 crore in equities, data with the depositories showed.

On the other hand, FPIs invested Rs 9,112 crore in the debt market in August so far. *—PTI*

**SAYS ICSI**

# India will need 1L company secys by 2030

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

India will need around 1 lakh ompany secretaries by 2030 amid rising economic growth and increasing focus on good governance, according to the company secretaries' apex body ICSI.

Currently, there are more than 73,000 company secretaries and out of the total, around 12,000 are practising company secretaries.

Company secretaries play a key role in the corporate governance framework in ensuring compliance of companies with various statutory requirements.

***PHOTO: ANI***

Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) President B Narasimhan said there has been a paradigm shift in the way the country's economy is perceived today and company secretaries have essentially become a significant linchpin in making India one of the most preferred investment destinations of the world. India will need around 1 lakh company secretaries by 2030, he told PTI during a recent interaction.

On an average, the ICSI gives membership to over 2,500 people every year.

Going by projections, India is expected to become a USD 7 trillion economy by 2030.

Meanwhile, to attract more young talent into the profession, the institute has also started direct registration of graduates and post graduates in the company secretary executive programme. *—PTI*

***PHOTO: PTI***

# ENTRY-LEVEL PAY FOR ENGINEERS IS ₹4-12L: COGNIZANT

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Facing social media backlash over the Rs 2.52 lakh annual salary offer for freshers, IT giant Cognizant on Sunday said it offers Rs 4-12 lakh salary to fresh engineering graduates, and the salary being quoted on social media is for non-engineering undergraduate degree holders.

With the two recruitments running almost parallel, hiring for three-year non-engineering/information technology undergraduate degree holders picked up and was widely shared as Cognizant's salary package for freshers.

Cognizant's salary package for engineering graduates matches the best in the industry.

On the annual increments, Cognizant said it works diligently to be competitive in its compensation strategy. *—PTI*

# 7 of 10 firms add ₹1.40L cr to mkt valuation

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

The combined market valuation of seven of the top 10 valued firms jumped Rs 1,40,863.66 crore in a holiday-shortened last week with the benchmark Sensex gaining nearly 1 per cent. Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys emerged as the biggest gainers in line with an optimistic trend at Dalal Street.

Last week, the BSE benchmark rose by 730.93 points or 0.91 per cent following a strong rally on Friday.

The market capitalisation (Mcap) of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) surged by Rs 67,477.33 crore to Rs 15,97,946.44 crore.

The valuation of Infosys jumped Rs 36,746.21 crore to Rs 7,72,023.49 crore.

The Mcap of Bharti Airtel rallied Rs 11,727.55 crore to Rs 8,45,123.87 crore and that of ICICI Bank by Rs 10,913.96 crore to Rs 8,36,115.19 crore.

The valuation of ITC soared Rs 8,569.73 crore to Rs 6,28,399.10 crore and that of Reliance Industries by Rs 5,311.4 crore to Rs 20,00,076.41 crore.

Hindustan Unilever added Rs 117.48 crore to take its valuation to Rs 6,45,926.13 crore.

However, the Mcap of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LICI) slumped Rs 47,943.48 crore to Rs 6,69,058.26 crore.

Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, State Bank of India, LIC, Hindustan Unilever and ITC. *—PTI*

**LOWEST IN INDIA**

# *HP LIC agents get salary of only ₹10K*

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

LIC agents on an average earn Rs 10,328 per month in Himachal Pradesh, the lowest among the insurer's agents in all states and UTs.

According to data provided by LIC to the Finance Ministry, the average monthly income was the highest at Rs 20,446 a month for LIC agents in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

In terms of the number of agents, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has the lowest number of agents at 273 in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Himachal Pradesh has 12,731 agents.

The average monthly income was the highest at Rs 20,446 a month for LIC agents in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands ***PHOTO: PTI***

The PSU life insurer had 13,90,920 agents across the country, according to the data.

Among the larger states, Uttar Pradesh had the maximum number of LIC agents at over 1.84 lakh with an average monthly income of Rs 11,887.

Maharashtra had more than 1.61 lakh LIC agents with an average monthly income of Rs 14,931. West Bengal had the third-highest number of LIC agents at 1,19,975 with an monthly income of Rs 13,512.

In Tamil Nadu, there were 87,347 agents with an average monthly income of Rs 13,444, while in Karnataka there were 81,674 agents with income of Rs 13,265.

In Rajasthan, there were 75,310 agents with income of Rs 13,960 a month.

In Madhya Pradesh, there were 63,779 agents with an average income of 11,647 per month, while in NCR of Delhi there were 40,469 agents with an average monthly income of Rs 15,169. *—PTI*

# Next round of India-Aus FTA talks from today

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Chief negotiators of India and Australia will begin the next round of talks for the comprehensive free trade agreement from tomorrow in Sydney, where both sides are likely to close negotiations on several chapters of the pact, an official said. Both countries have already implemented an interim pact and are in discussions to expand its scope under the CECA (Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement). The interim pact - Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) - came into force in December 2022. The tenth round of negotiations is scheduled from 19-22 August in Sydney. In this round, the official said that both countries are likely to get into market access discussions in goods and services. India's exports to Australia last fiscal stood at USD 7.94 billion, while imports were USD 16.15 billion. *—PTI*

# BPCL plans ₹1.7L cr expense to expand core biz

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

State-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation plans to invest Rs 1.7 lakh crore over the next five years to grow its core oil refining and fuel marketing business as well as in 'future big bets' of petrochemicals and green energy, its chairman G Krishnakumar has said. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), currently, owns about 14 per cent of India's oil refining capacity and about a quarter of the fuel retailing network. It plans to grow these businesses while foraying into newer areas. BPCL is implementing new petrochemical projects at two of its three oil refineries. A Rs 49,000 crore ethylene cracker project is being implemented at the Bina refinery in Madhya Pradesh, alongside raising oil refining capacity from the current 7.8 million tonnes to 11 million tonnes annually by 2029. *—PTI*

# CTPL secures $4M in latest funding round

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Admission management company CTPL on Sunday said it has secured USD four million (about Rs 33 crore) in a Series A funding round. CTPL's technology and strategic marketing innovations have streamlined university admissions, increasing efficiency and user-friendliness, a company statement said. According to the statement, CTPL has successfully secured a USD 4 million Series A funding round, which includes a mix of dilutive and non-dilutive capital, reflecting the confidence of investors in the company's growth potential. Led by Gujarat Ventures Private Limited (GVFL) and co-invested by Physis Capital, the round also saw participation from UCIC, Recur, and other investors. CTPL's revenue has more than doubled in FY24, and the company aims for another 100 per cent growth in FY25, indicating market demand. *—PTI*

# Macrotech net debt rises 43.5% to ₹4,320 cr

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Realty firm Macrotech Developers Ltd's net debt rose 43.5 per cent to Rs 4,320 crore during the first quarter of this fiscal year due to higher investment in land acquisition and construction. Mumbai-based Macrotech Developers, which sells its projects under the Lodha brand, is one of the leading developers in the country. According to its latest investors presentation, the company's net debt stood at Rs 4,320 crore as of 30 June, 2024, against Rs 3,010 crore at the end of the March quarter of 2023-24.The net debt stood at Rs 4,320 crore, 0.24 times equity, well below the ceiling of 0.5 times equity, the presentation said. *—PTI*

This year saw a significant workforce reduction across various industries, reflecting broader economic trends and organisational strategies.

**HERE IS A LOOK AT SOME OF THE FIRMS THAT SACKED ITS EMPLOYEES.**

### RELIANCE: 42,000

The firm has axed 42,000 employees reducing its total workforce by 11% compared to the previous year. The layoffs are related to reliance group undergoing a digital transformation. The firm also slowed its hiring pace, bringing 1,71,000 new people, a decrease from 2,63,000. Meanwhile, Reliance Jio increased the prices of data packs by over 25 per cent for a few plans for both, pre-paid and post-paid as from 3 July. The job cuts come a month after the Rs 5000 crore wedding bash of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant

### DELL: 6,000

Dell has laid off 6,000 employees due to a prolonged decline in demand for personal computers. The that firm saw 11% drop in revenue in the fourth quarter had previously laid off 6,650 workers in 2023.

### PAYPAL: 2,500

PayPal cut 2,500 jobs as it focuses on AI-driven products and a one-click checkout feature. The company saw a 20% decline in its share value over the past year.

### FLIPKART: 1,100

Flipkart, aiming for a USD 60 billion IPO in 2025-2026, laid off 1,100 employees. In 2023, it froze hiring and did not increase salaries for 30% of employees.

### WHIRLPOOL: 1,000

Whirlpool laid off 1,000 employees globally to save USD 400 million. The company reported an 8.1% decline in large appliance sales in North America in the first quarter.

### SALESFORCE: 700

Software company Salesforce laid off about 300 employees to control costs. The firm had cut about 700 workers earlier this year at the start of 2024. Despite the layoffs, Salesforce has expressed intentions to hire in key areas to drive revenue growth.

### APPLE: 600

Apple has laid off over 600 employees from its EV project, marking its first significant layoff. The company has also shelved its MicroLED display project for the Apple Watch. The car project was cancelled amid a lack of resolution among executives over its direction and costs.

### YES BANK: 500

Yes Bank laid off 500 employees as it plans to shift towards digital banking instead of manual help. The employee expenses grew 12 per cent from FY23 to FY24, costing Rs 3,363 crore and Rs 3,774 crore, respectively. It is expected to help lower operating expenses, which had risen by nearly 17% last year.

### BYJU'S: 500

The cash-strapped ed-tech firm Byju's laid off 500 employees amid financial struggles and a valuation markdown. The company faces a FEMA violation notice worth Rs 9,362.35 crore. Byju's is laying off employees over the phone and letting them go without serving notice period.

### SWIGGY: 400

Swiggy reduced its workforce by 7%, ahead of its IPO. The firm has faced challenges in its grocery unit Instamart. In April, it announced integration of Instamart with online retail division Swiggy Mall.

### UNACADEMY: 250

SoftBank-backed edtech startup Unacademy sacked 250 employees across the company. Following an initial surge due to the pandemic, Unacademy had witnessed a deceleration in its online business. Last month, Unacademy co-founder Hemesh Singh stepped down as the chief technology officer and transitioned to an advisory role.

### OLA CABS: 200

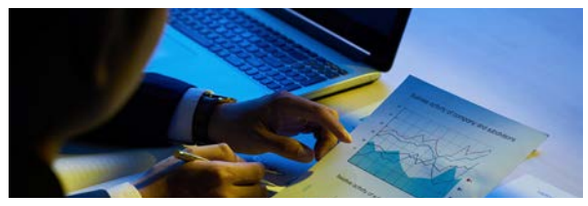
Ride-hailing company Ola laid off 10% of its workforce, affecting around 200 employees in April. The layoffs are aimed at improving profitability at Ola Cabs. Chief Executive Hemant Bakshi resigned just three months after taking on the role.

### HEALTHIFY: 150

Bengaluru-based Healthify laid off 150 employees as it plans global expansion, particularly into the US. The startup reported a loss of Rs 142 crore in 2023.

### AMAZON: 100

Amazon's cloud computing division laid off hundreds of employees due to declining sales in its Web Services unit. Amazon had cut over 27,000 corporate roles following the pandemic-era hiring boom.



Research: *Aarati Krishna;* Design: *Boopathy D*

# Wissa and Mbeumo on target as Brentford beat Crystal

## Yoane Wissa netted the winner in the 76th minute

Wissa and Mbeumo celebrate after beating Crystal Palace PHOTO: X / @BRENTFORDFC

**LONDON, 18 AUG**

Yoane Wissa earned Brentford a 2-1 opening-day win over Crystal Palace after Eberechi Eze's opener was controversially ruled out.

England winger Eze thought he had opened the scoring when his quick-thinking free-kick caught out Mark Flekken at his near post, but referee Sam Barrott had already blown for a foul by Will Hughes before it crossed the line.

The timing of his decision meant VAR was unable to intervene, while Palace had further cause for frustration when replays showed Hughes had more of a case of being fouled himself.

"The referee has had a nightmare, it is a monumental mistake."

Fuelled by that let-off and having been dominated to that point, Brentford took the lead four minutes later when Bryan Mbeumo cut in from the right and curled an excellent finish past Dean Henderson.

They could have doubled their advantage within moments when Kevin Schade flashed a shot just wide, before Palace regained control and finally levelled 11 minutes into the second period.

A deep cross from Tyrick Mitchell picked out Daniel Munoz at the far post and the wing-back's nod down caught out Ethan Pinnock, who could not organise his feet in time to avoid diverting the ball into his own net.

Palace's hopes of completing the turnaround were put on ice when Odsonne Edouard slotted home a second only to be denied by a narrow offside flag.

Instead, Brentford's improved second-half performance was rewarded when Wissa poked home from close-range when Henderson could only parry Nathan Collins' shot into his path.

*—AP*

# Sinner, Iga stage Cincy fightbacks as Zverev escapes

Iga Swiatek, Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz PHOTO: X / @CINCYTENNIS

**CINCINNATI, 18 AUG**

World number one Jannik Sinner and Iga Swiatek both turned around losing situations on Saturday to move into the semi-finals of the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Open. Sinner prevented rival Andrey Rublev from repeating a triumph from last Saturday in Montreal as he defeated the sixth seed in a 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 fightback. Swiatek did the same in the women's draw as she worked to overcome teen Mirra Andreeva 4-6, 6-3, 7-5. Sinner will square off in the semis against third-ranked 2021 champion Alexander Zverev, who got past rain interruptions in the final set to defeat Ben Shelton 3-6, 7-6 (7/3), 7-5.

The third set was start-stop but the German advanced to his third consecutive Cincinnati final-four spot.

"Conditions and the interruptions were tough, but Ben was the toughest part of the match," Zverev said.

"He has played amazing tennis all week. It was tough to find my comfort zone today, but it's great to get the win."

Top seed Sinner took to the court for only his second match of the week after a first-round bye and a walkover on Friday.

Zverev has won four of five matches against Sinner three at Grand Slams, including last year's US Open.

**Sinner** -- whose fitness has been compromised in recent months by a hip niggle, illness, and tonsillitis which forced him to miss the Olympics -- stormed back to win the second set and break Rublev to start the third.

He clinched victory in a set where five of the 10 games were breaks of serve. His match-point ball was caught by a gust of wind and put out of the reach of his opponent.

*—PTI*

### Alcaraz apologizes

Carlos Alcaraz has apologized for his behavior during Friday afternoon's loss to Gael Monfils at the Cincinnati Open. During the third set, Alcaraz destroyed his racket by repeatedly smashing it on the court in a rare show of frustration for the four-time Grand Slam winner. The No. 3 player in the ATP rankings lost 4-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-4 to the 37-year-old Monfils. Posting in Spanish on X on Saturday. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

## Our fight will continue, and truth will prevail: Phogat

**BALALI, 18 AUG**

Overwhelmed by the grand reception she received on her arrival from the Paris Olympics, wrestler Vinesh Phogat said that her fight against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) would continue and hoped that "the truth will prevail". Hundreds of supporters had gathered outside the IGI airport here on Saturday to give a rousing welcome to Vinesh who was disqualified for being overweight after reaching the 50kg final at the Olympics. Vinesh's appeal against her disqualification was rejected by the ad-hoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS). On her way to Balali from Delhi, Vinesh was felicitated by her supporters and 'khap' panchayats in several villages as it took her almost 13 hours to cover 135 km. She reached her native village in Balali around midnight and was accorded a grand welcome by the villagers.*—PTI*

## Jon Rahm with a 62 takes a 2-shot lead

**NEW YORK, 18 AUG**

Jon Rahm finished eagle-birdie-birdie for an 8-under 62 on Saturday, giving the Spaniard a two-shot lead over Brooks Koepka and three others in LIV Golf Greenbrier. The Old White course at the West Virginia resort was as vulnerable as ever — only six players in the 54-man field were over par through two rounds — and it led to a bunched leaderboard. Rahm, coming off an Olympic disappointment when he went from a four-shot lead to not even getting to the podium, was at 14-under 126.*—PTI*

## Maharaj helps SA secure 40-run win over West Indies

**PROVIDENCE, 18 AUG**

South Africa bowled out West Indies for 222 to secure a 40-run victory on day three of the second test Saturday after Keshav Maharaj wrapped up the win with his fifth wicket of the match. It was South Africa's tenth consecutive test series win against West Indies and was highlighted by Maharaj becoming South Africa's most successful spinner in tests with 171 wickets after taking his series tally to 13 when he had Jayden Seales out for the final wicket. That overshadowed a six-wicket haul by Seales in South Africa's second innings as the tourists were dismissed for 246 after resuming on 223-5.*—PTI*

## Women's U19 T20 WC: India to open against WI in 2025

**DUBAI, 18 AUG**

PHOTO: PTI

Defending champions India will open their campaign against the West Indies in the second edition of the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup to be played in Malaysia from January 18 to February 2 next year.

India has been clubbed alongside hosts Malaysia, West Indies, and Sri Lanka in Group A.

India defeated England to win the inaugural edition of the tournament in South Africa last year.

England, neighbors Ireland, Pakistan, and the USA are placed in Group B.

South Africa, along with New Zealand, new entrants Samoa, and a qualifier from Africa will form Group C, while Group D comprises Australia, Bangladesh, Scotland, and a qualifier from Asia.

Each team will play the other sides in the round-robin phase, making for three games each in the group stage.

The top three sides from all four groups will then progress to the Super Six stage.

The bottom-ranked sides from Groups A and D, and B and C will contest in the last-place play-off on January 24.

The 12 sides in the Super Six stage are further divided into two groups, with the top three teams from Groups A and D making up Group 1, and those of Groups B and C making up Group 2.

In this stage, each side will carry forward the points, wins, and NRRs (Net Run Rate) they secured against fellow Super Six qualifying sides.

*—PTI*

**INDIAN STREET PREMIER LEAGUE SEASON 2**

BCCI treasurer and Indian Street Premier League (ISPL) core committee member Ashish Shelar with former cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and Bollywood actors and Tigers of Kolkata owners Kareena Kapoor Khan and Saif Ali Khan during the launch of the ISPL season 2, in Mumbai on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

## Pakistan vs B'desh 2nd Test moved to Karachi

**LAHORE, 18 AUG**

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday decided to move the second Test against Bangladesh from Karachi to Rawalpindi due to the ongoing renovation work at the National Stadium.

The decision has been made in consultation with the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB). The first Test is already slated to play in Rawalpindi from August 21.

The PCB announced last week that the second Test (August 30-September 3) would be played without spectators in Karachi owing to the construction work to spruce up the stadium ahead of next year's ICC Champions Trophy.

But a reliable source within the board said the company carrying out the construction had earlier this week advised the PCB to move the match from Karachi because of the deployment of heavy equipment and the sound emanating from them could disturb the players. *—PTI*

## Bayer leave it late to win German Super Cup

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

Ten-man Bayer Leverkusen beat Stuttgart 4-3 on penalties in the season-opening German Super Cup on Saturday, winning the trophy for the first time. Victor Boniface's 11th-minute goal was canceled out four minutes later when Stuttgart's Enzo Millot leveled. Leverkusen were then reduced to 10 men shortly before half-time when Martin Terrier saw red for a dangerous tackle. Deniz Undav gave Stuttgart the lead in the second half but Patrik Schick scored with two minutes remaining to equalise for Leverkusen and send the match to penalties.

Team Bayer Leverkusen won the German Super Cup PHOTO: X / @BAYER04_EN

Bayern Munich loanees Frans Kraetzig and Silas Mvumpa missed from the spot while Leverkusen converted all of their penalties."What we did in the last 10 or 15 minutes, with a man down, to score the equalizer -- it was unbelievable," Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso said after the match, praising his side's "huge spirit". *—PTI*

## Ronaldo scores but Al Nassr routed in SC

**ABHA, 18 AUG**

Cristiano Ronaldo is still waiting for his first domestic trophy in Saudi Arabia after Al-Nassr lost 4-1 to Al-Hilal in the Saudi Super Cup on Saturday.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner scored the opening goal just before halftime in the season's curtain-raiser between Saudi Pro League champion Al-Hilal and runner-up Al-Nassr.

However, the 39-year-old forward then cut a frustrated figure after Al-Hilal netted four times in 17 minutes in the second half, with former Newcastle and Fulham striker Aleksandar getting two goals.

Ronaldo, who joined Al-Nassr in December 2022 and set a league record last season with 35 goals, scored from close range in the 44th minute after being teed up by Abdulrahman Ghareeb. Sergej Milinkovic-Savic made it 1-1 in the 55th, scoring from just inside the area, and Mitrovic then netted twice in six minutes.

Brazilian winger Malcom added Al-Hilal's fourth to give the league champion a second successive Super Cup victory."We showed how good we are in the second half," Mitrovic said. "We had some problems in the first half and then changed in the second. *—PTI*

Cristiano Ronaldo PHOTO: X / @CRISTIANO

**ALCHEMIST AND A CRAZY DIAMOND**

# *Decoding Manu Bhaker-Rana bond*

**NEW DELHI, 18 AUG**

She calls him a father figure, and he perceives himself as her protector. Sometimes, he even needs to protect her from herself.

Manu Bhaker and Jaspal Rana are chalk and cheese when it comes to their personalities but together at the shooting range, they can plot Olympic medals with mere eye contact.

The strict disciplinarian coach and his effervescent protege were at PTI headquarters to interact with its editors and talk about a journey that had its fair share of rough and tumble but eventually yielded India two bronze medals at the recent Paris Olympics, making Bhaker the first athlete in post-independence India to achieve such a feat.

"You have a controversy right here," he interjected.

Bhaker was quick to clarify though, "I mean it's not like a slap (literally) but like, I'm just using slang. It's like he'll push my limits. He'll be like 'You've been training for this and you will be able to deliver."

Jaspal Rana and Manu Bhaker PHOTO: X

The two shared a laugh soon after, aware that their stormy parting of ways before the Tokyo Olympics is still one of the most talked about controversies of Indian shooting.

Tokyo was a disaster in every sense of the word for Bhaker, her weapon malfunctioned before the 10m air pistol qualifications and she never really got going after that setback in any of her events.

Rana could only watch in frustration on TV in far-away India.

"My work is to protect her. It is not only coaching. At this level, we cannot teach them how to see or how to pull the trigger. We just need to give that protection even from their self," he explained.

"Sometimes it (performances, attention) goes to your head and you're all over the place. So, to keep them grounded and keep them protected, that's our job, the coach's job," he asserted as Bhaker nodded in agreement.

**None to blame for Tokyo debacle**

Bhaker's clarity of thought belies her age. The youngster from Haryana's Jhajjar had no qualms admitting once again that the Tokyo heartbreak nearly drove her away from shooting, and that she hung in there by the thinnest of threads. "I would like to say about Tokyo that there was nobody to blame...it's in the past already. Tokyo taught me a lot of things to be prepared in a better manner, more aware of everything, my equipment, my mental health, physical health," she said.

"I would say, it made me sad at times. I was on the verge of giving up shooting at times, but then I was, Ok, 'what else would you do'," she remembered. Enter Rana once again to clear the cobwebs of her mind, in a way protecting her from herself.

"When we (Jaspal and I) started to work together again, that was the time when I was like 'you know what, shooting is going to be it for me'," she said. *—PTI*

## Advani wins billiards final of Western India Billiards

**MUMBAI, 18 AUG**

Pankaj Advani PHOTO: PTI

Pankaj Advani crushed S Shrikrishna by a margin of 822-520 in the billiards final to clinch yet another title win here in the Western India Billiards and Snooker Championship on Sunday.

The 27-time world champion Advani had earlier won five consecutive finals in different competitions in Mumbai and his triumph on Sunday was his sixth in a row in summit clashes.

Over the last two years, Advani has recorded title wins in both the classic billiards and snooker tournaments in the last two editions of the Cricket Club of India event, and earlier this year he won the NSCI Baulkline 3.0 competition.

Advani was thus awarded the winning prize of Rs 2 lakh while Tamil Nadu's Shrikrishna got Rs 1.20 lakh as the runner-up.

Dhvaj Haria and Shahyan Razmi, who lost in the semifinal round, got Rs 60,000 each for their efforts.

In the summit clash, both Advani and Shrikrishna started tentatively and struggled to stitch together big breaks initially.

Advani compiled sequence breaks 57, 120, 62, 86, and 56, while Shrikrishna managed a solitary effort of 94.

Earlier in the semi-finals, Advani stamped his authority and gave Mumbai's talented teenager Shahyan Razmi a good exhibition of precision play while executing the winning and losing hazards and making contact with the balls for the cannons.

Shahyan could only watch in awe as Advani compiled a double-century effort and multiple breaks of 185, 176, 171, 160, and 140 to cruise to a 1320-300 victory with a degree of comfort.

*—PTI*